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ART

Under Western eyes

By E. H. Gombrich

MICHAEL SULLIVAN:

Symbols of Eternity
The Art of Landscape Painting in
China
205pp with 115 illustrations.
Clarendon Press: Oxford University
Press. £10.
0 19 517351 2

This attractive volume grew out of Michael Sullivan's Oxford Slade Lectures of 1974, which must have given his audience much pleasure. It is intended 'for anyone who loves art and knows little about Chinese painting, and would like to approach a little closer to one of the greatest artistic traditions of the world'. Written with evident warmth and sincerity, the text surmounts many of the obstacles which might have thwarted this purpose.

The first obstacle lies in the nature of the subject-matter itself. Some of the greatest monuments of the Chinese landscape tradition are hand-rolls of considerable length (from right to left) by unrolling and rolling one section after the other. Much of the tradition is reproduced in a small format and so the author had to confine himself to details of scrolls, or to hanging scrolls and album leaves which can more easily be fitted on to a conventional page. Even here, though, in the small and inevitably rather indifferent reproductions, little survives of the subtlety and force of the originals and it is a measure of Professor Sullivan's power of persuasion that he believes him when he says that a pale fragment of a scroll captured 'travelling up-river in mid-winter' 'gives such a vivid sense of a river journey in North China in the depths of winter that it makes us shiver to look at it'.

The same sense of involvement stands the author in good stead in the narrative sections of the book and makes the reader almost forget the tour de force needed to tell a story extending over some two thousand years in seven brief chapters. It is a story which, as the author reminds us, cannot be told without reference to the history of China, the rise and fall of dynasties and the consequent shifts in the centre of cultural activity. We are made to see the impact of these vicissitudes on the lives and beginning of the artist. From the China is rich in personalities of about whom the sources give us many vivid character traits and biographical incidents: his panorama is enlivened by a number of thumbnail sketches of those eccentric scholar-painters who carried the tradition of the art which concerns him.

Professor Sullivan is aware that his very skill in presenting an integrated picture has its pitfalls. Writing about the masters of the Southern Sung who had withdrawn to Hangchow after the fall of Kaifeng, he suggests that 'even the spring blossoms on the water-side seem to express a poignant yearning, a struggle for survival rather than a joyful sense of renewal'. 'I do not know' - he continues - 'if I am reading too much into these haunting pictures, and I have perhaps deliberately chosen ones that convey this mood. There are more cheerful ones.' Quoting some of the cynical utterances and despondent verses of the eighteenth-century master Cheng Shide, he admits again that the painter's 'lovely paintings of bamboo and orchids give no rest of the bitterness he felt'. As indeed how could they? Evocations of the Zeitgeist and of psychological traits are certainly useful literary devices for turning isolated facts into a coherent and memorable story, but for that very reason they tend to mask the complexities of life.

But in any case Professor Sullivan's true aim lies elsewhere. He wants to offer an interpretation of Chinese landscape art which will bring it closer to the Western reader. His title *Symbols of Eternity* offers the key to this intention. It is taken from the Book of Wordsworth's *Grande Describes his crossing of the Alps*

in words which strikingly recall the images of Chinese landscape paintings: '... The immeasurable height / Of woods decaying, never to be decayed; / The stationary blasts of water-falls; / The rocks that Mutter'd close upon our ears, / Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side / As if a voice were in them, the sick sight / And giddy prospect of the raving stream, / The unfetter'd clouds, and region of the Heavens, / Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light / Were all like workings of one mind, the features / Of the same face, the blossoms upon one tree; / Characters of the great Apocalypse, / The types and symbols of eternity, / Of first and last, and midst, and without end.'

No doubt these lines show how much is universally human in the response of the Western poet and the Eastern painter to the sublimity of mountain scenery. They might also be used to point to the difference between East and West. Wordsworth feels crushed by the overwhelming power of divine omnipotence; his emotion is rooted in dread. Is that also the dominant reaction of the Chinese painter? It is not relevant here that after all it is he who has created - or at least re-created - these symbols of eternity. The power is his to manipulate the forces of nature in magic and rhyme, in gardening and in painting. Sullivan reminds us that in the early fourth century 'Royal parks were landscaped on a huge scale to suggest Mount K'un-lun to the West, the Eastern Sea, the blessed island P'eng-lai and haunts of nature deities, fairies and immortals' and that during the T'ang dynasty miniature landscape scenes were devised on trays, the outcrops of the Japanese *bonsei*. In like way, he suggests, 'a picture could become a mysterious thing that... contained the essence of the world of nature'. It was in fact in that glorious eighth century, the period of the great poet Li Po and Tu Fu, that Wang Wei, himself an outstanding poet, became the most famous landscape painter. We do not know what his paintings looked like, and no doubt later achievements were subsequently attributed to him, but the concept of the artist as a creator which he shares with his contemporary Wu Tao-tzu remains inseparable from the tradition.

Here one might think that in looking for the power of the landscape, the period of the great poet Li Po and Tu Fu, that Wang Wei, himself an outstanding poet, became the most famous landscape painter. We do not know what his paintings looked like, and no doubt later achievements were subsequently attributed to him, but the concept of the artist as a creator which he shares with his contemporary Wu Tao-tzu remains inseparable from the tradition.

More Chinese landscape painting shows is simply that, as Sullivan was wrong in regarding it as an expression of the indispensable criterion of eristic achievement, and that not because its symbols convey a deeper or higher or more essential truth but rather because all art operates with symbols. The symbols of nature for peaks, rocks, pine, water, clouds or huts can be com-

learn in fact that the seventeenth-century painter Huang-jen was a devout Buddhist in whose landscape the artist senses the expression of the idea of his creed that all phenomena, the very evidence of the senses itself are illusion, *maya*, akin to a dream. To express this notion of illusion and non-attachment in the visible forms of mountains, rocks, and trees, in such a way as to move us by their beauty would seem to be impossible. Dges Hsueh-jen, Professor Sullivan asks, 'achieve it because, being Chinese, he is not only a Buddhist but also a Taoist, to whom nature is no mere illusion but a manifestation of the Real, to be identified with and felt in his innermost being? If we could, by sympathy and intuition, probe to the heart of this mysterious duality, we might come some way toward understanding the mind of the Chinese landscape painter.' It is a noble ambition, but is it ever capable of fulfilment? Can we 'understand the mind' of Aldorf or of Ruyssdel and how could we be sure if we did?

One approach to this goal which the author hints at seems almost bound to lead us astray. He likes to suggest that the poetry and the religion of the Far East have become more intelligible to us because we have arrived, chiefly through the physical sciences, at a view of the nature of reality that in certain fundamental respects is strikingly similar to the view that the East arrived at, through intuition and reflection, over two thousand years ago.

Pleas of this kind do not improve with repetition. Some seventy years ago Kandinsky proclaimed that modern science had dissolved solid matter and was about to confirm the spiritual insights of Eastern wisdom. But any comparison between Taoist mysticism and Einstein's theories can never do justice to either. Unlike the mystic the modern scientist does not seek to grasp the essence of reality, he tries to construct a hypothesis that stands up to observational tests. The fact is relevant, because Sullivan also invokes the authority of Ruskin, whose conception of landscape painting he finds in his class that of the Chinese. He quotes Ruskin's expression of the hope that landscape painting might 'become an instrument of gigantic moral power', but we need only open *Modern Painters* to see where he looked for the power. In the chapter 'Of Truth of Skies' 'Of Truth of Earth', 'Of Truth of Water', etc., with their notorious demonstrations of how far Turner surpassed his predecessors in the accurate observation and rendering of all these natural phenomena.

How Chinese landscape painting shows is simply that, as Sullivan was wrong in regarding it as an expression of the indispensable criterion of eristic achievement, and that not because its symbols convey a deeper or higher or more essential truth but rather because all art operates with symbols. The symbols of nature for peaks, rocks, pine, water, clouds or huts can be com-

lined, modified and refined in countless ways, they can incorporate more or less of natural appearances, but they could never serve as faithful records of a particular view without losing their identity and purpose. There is no need to apologise for the absence of perspective, all the less since central perspective could not be reconciled with the format of a handscroll. Chinese artists were in any case discouraged from taking this road by the critical opinion that any concession to mere realism was vulgar.

While this caveat may sound agreeable to the contemporary Western reader the lack of originality which is so apparent in the history of the genre must put him off. Professor Sullivan tries from the beginning to overcome this resistance by reminding us of the role of music in Western society: '... in listening to music we are, for the most part, listening to familiar works, and this does not trouble us at all. In the hands of a master interpreter each familiar work is born again and much of our pleasure comes from the performer's understanding of the theme, from subtle nuances of interpretation and, above all, his touch. In Chinese painting too, what matters is not the novelty of the theme but the quality of his touch'. The author admits that the analogy is incomplete, but it is illuminating, for it is indeed tempting to look the mastery of performance rather than the mastery of the subject-matter. This alone can help to explain the emergence of that type which has an exact parallel in the West, the scholar-painter who lays stress on his amateur status. Whatever his intellectual and social aspirations may have been of a Leonardo, a Rubens, a Poussin or a Delacroix, his virtuosity was the result of hard grind. The Chinese conception, as has often been stressed, links up with calligraphy as an art of the elite which does not depend on physical effort but rather on the personal touch.

It was from the aesthetics of this esoteric art that Chinese critics distilled their criteria of excellence in painting. That excellence, we hear in many variations, is not measured on the form but on the way it is infused with something else, be it spirit or force or some of life or vitality. Western scholars have been somewhat exasperated by the vagueness and ambiguity of these alleged criteria of quality, but would it be absurd to sum them all up in the term 'magic', leaving the term to oscillate freely between the literal and the metaphorical meaning? We have all experienced the disconcerting impression of a familiar performance in the theatre or the concert hall which failed mysteriously because it 'lacked magic'. It is disconcerting precisely because we feel unable to analyse, let alone to prove this failure. But then this disconcerting impression of a familiar performance in the theatre or the concert hall which failed mysteriously because it 'lacked magic'. It is disconcerting precisely because we feel unable to analyse, let alone to prove this failure.

Of course we must allow Sullivan his personal taste, all the more as he helps here to overcome a prejudice which was much in evidence at the time of that memorable exhibition. Visitors then used to linger in the rooms where early paintings were displayed but hurried through the remainder since they would not brook with 'late' productions. Hence Professor Sullivan redresses the balance by teaching us to see the range and individuality of eighteenth-century masters who knew how to forge a personal style or styles from the rich gamut of the traditions which they studied so eagerly. It is only in the nineteenth century that he finds anything of merit to report - a view which is not altogether borne out by the works from the Hummel Collection recently shown at the Museum Yamao Bunkan of Nara. About the twentieth century the author is again eloquent and persuasive; howling devoted a monograph some twenty years ago in Chicago on the twentieth century, he pleads for an open-minded appreciation of the varied styles now practised. Naturally he has no truck with the 'cultural revolution' which all but smothered these hopeful developments, but did he have to write of China, China, China, what, that she 'is said to have "depicted the masses"? To one reader, at least, this gratuitous aside intrudes a jarring note into an engaging book.

Requiem for D.M.

In summer's heat, under a great tree
I hear the heavy cry down.
The beauty of earth, the memory of your fire
Tall of a year gone by and more
Bringing the leaves to light: they spread
Between these words and the birds that hang
Unseen in predatory flight. Again,
Your high house is in fluting hands
And what we were saying there in what was said.
My body measures the ground beneath me
Warm in this beech-foot shade, my verse
Pacing out the path I shall not follow
To where you spoke once with a wounded
And wondering contempt against your flock,
Your mind crowded with eagerness and anger.
The howls come circling unopposedly. Their clangor
Seems like the energy of loss. It is hunger.
It pierces and pieces together, a single note,
The territories they come floating over now:
The escarpment, the foreshore and the sea;
The year that has been, the year to be;
Leaf on leaf, a century's increment
That has quickened and weathered, withered on the tree
Down into this brown circle where the shadows thicken.

Charles Tomlinson

By Janet Morgan

Thank goodness for the misprints, flickering beacons along the way. Here are the authorities before the Friends of the Earth, reading Green History at Oxford, there he is again, a "crypto-junior Minister" at, even more mysteriously, the Ministry of Dorks. Sometimes the errors are delightfully apt: Richard Crossman compiles what sounds like a politician's dictionary of disguises, *The Vanishing Cabinet Minister*. This doubtless came in handy when the Lord Chancellor chopped his mind on the EFTA surcharge, "a tiny only colour does not" apart from Crossman after a "midnight" of errors, mistakes, it is rather odd to suddenly find a single erratum slip, correcting all mis-spellings of Robert Schuman's name.

THE REALISTS
Portraits of Eight Novelists
C. P. SNOW

"Benign, shrewd, Maughonist!..."
The Sunday Times
"...a splendid book..."
JOHN BRODERICK — Irish Times
"...entertaining and rewarding..."
ALEX DE YONGE — Financial Times
"...unfadingly readable..."
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The Daily Telegraph

A Playgoer's Guide.

"A very good book...necessary and excellent...there is no play that he has not enriched for me",
PETER HALL - *The Observer*
"...this is a clearly written, comprehensive study of plays...Readable, useful, pleasant". *The Sunday Times*

Jack K... ..



Carolyn Cassady loved
and shared them both.
This is her story.

"Heart Beat" x

Frugal and serious, the author's own career sets a stern example in economy. His early childhood was happy (apart from a demoralizing psychiatric visit to a London "nervous" hospital) but he might have received a persistent fear of the dark). His years followed by a tortured term at preparatory school. By the end of the First World War, however, his prosperity had so diminished that he was sent to a convent school. He was keenly conscious of his family's need to save money, and felt an abiding sympathy with all those who were short of it. At the age of 15 he decided on a regime of austere self-discipline, and became a literary servant, journalist and novelist. He often found it hard to make a living, but he was always respected of the taxpayers' money; only in the eight years in the House of Commons did he not agree to join a Parliamentary visit to the tropics. His interest, amid the social dislocations of Rio do Janeiro, was to study the causes of Brazilian poverty and the system of social hierarchy and corruption. Again, it was in his nineteenth years that he acquired a family car, his authorial vanity and his sense of duty being unpredictable warring influences.

It is difficult in dialogue why Mr. Joy's memoirs are so full of melancholy. The evenness of his prose, the length and detail of his account, may have something to do with it—but there are two murdurer explanations. First, there is the fact that, in the most diffident way, the author always conveys the feeling that he is right—more reasonable, more informed—“without of course in those days any research assistants” or such frills”, more painstaking, efficient and reasonable than the personal rivalries of Labour politics, “which were forced on one by the system”. Mr Joy vastly preferred Whitehall warfare, particularly when, as in his wartime job as the Ministry of Supply and the Board of Trade, important decisions could be taken with brisk unanimity, ideally by a very small group of two or three, working informally, round the clock. (The fact that Heathrow Airport was decided on in forty minutes.) Happily, Mr Joy recalls the devilry of three colleagues invented to determine and fill in first-priority job demands: “In 1967, at the age of 40, I had spent years spent in the government and the Preference Committee still seemed to me the most efficient and successful organizing machine in which I had been lucky to work—barring any head-on collisions of the Treasury in Cripps’s and Gaiskell’s days.” Was it

Emanuel Shinnwell stalks like a villain through Mr. Jay's chapter particularly the pages on the 1944 fuel crisis, where he lambasts the "so-called perversely" which he Shinnwell called "Arlene." "Prime Minister, you should look at the statistics. You should look at the imponderables." Another of his boogies is Harold Wilson, whom he described at the time of the election in 1945 as "a man in 1949 are here and there." "The decline of the empire of the 1964-70 Labour Administration, Mr. Jay laments that Hugh Galskell lived in head of the Government, all this would certainly have been different."

As for Crossman, he comes in for a repeated lambasting. In 1931 he and Mr. Jay, in the New York College friends were in have a long dogdays in the High Street, but Crossman accepted a post which obliged him to live in College and to "tell the others. This was a considered Crossman to Jay, who was confident since Winchester his closest friends. "We did not speak again for some years." Later, Jay was to be constantly assailed by Crossman's "insolent frivolity in serious matters" and to "tell the colleagues' habit of keeping diaries. The Mr. Jay also repeated, for his own "compiled" "putty from private records" due from time in time evidence to Crossman's

Describing people, with his
and sensitivity, appears to let
Jay's strength as a writer's
political history may, be dy-
coloured but he under-
character, illuminating with a
ing anecdote, remembering a
tious or trick of behaviour that
struck him. Intellectually in-
and personally unsterile, he is
means desiccated. Parts of his
are extremely moving, when he
speaks, for instance, of death
the countryside, the death
of his father, the death of
of his constituents, there is a
unparalleled slough of release
a frightening school. He is an
interesting mixture, and so are

By Alan Bell

It was C. C. Benson's habit from time to time to plant what he called a "fatish" in some secret place—some or small object ceremonially deposited, its presence to checked now and again as a reassurance of continuity and permanence. His literary reputation was founded (to his own embarrassment) on such easy untread works as *The Upton Letter* and *From a College Window*, was a temporary one. He enjoyed a highly profitable acquaintance with a number of publicists but he gave him none of the lasting fame for which he constantly yearned. He had, however, left enormous fatish secretly planted, sealed chest containing no less than twenty-eight years of his life, the last twenty-eight years of his life and written with all the literary fluency and observant skill at his command. More at last is an object which will ensure that he is remembered, and that he is remembered as himself—of, once fashionable so pretentiously.

A selection from the diaries, remarkably frank in its inclusion of comments on others but naturalistic, more reticent on Benson's personation of Jesus, was edited by his friend Porcarius in 1927, and the three diaries were placed on this offensive to literary, academic, and above all personal record. In 1925, fifty-five years after Benson's death, the *Diary of a Disciple* was published. College, Cambridge, opened the book and had the good sense to withhold David Newsome to investigate its contents. Dr Newsome had long been known as an authority on the *Diary of a Disciple*, and his investigation of the *Diary of a Disciple* (where Benson's father, later Archbishop of Canterbury, was the first Headmaster) even more notably from the sensibility

The problem of dealing with text not for short of five million words in length must have baffled even the best of editors. The sampling, and sheer hard work of Dr Newsome has managed to gain command not merely of this vast manuscript source but also of all the other innumerable published writings and his unpublished letters. Rather than merely present a selection from the totality (although his publishers announce a second volume for issue in the autumn), Dr Newsome has decided that a full-scale account in the diary and the diarist would be the best approach. The result is a book that is unusual, sensitive and penetrating. It is a work of sympathy and humour—a biographical work of rare quality. Occasionally the analysis seems rather ropey, but the 'recapitulations' are an understated study of so voluminous a document.

The very idea of Benson's personal record is in reflection of the literary fecundity which produced his published writings. He was compulsive writer in prose and in verse too, while he still practiced it (the first two stanzas of his early poem in the *Oxford Book of English Verse* were composed in a dream) and fantasized with inspiration surviving long enough to be written, able to complete it aweek). The daily output of writing became a physical necessity to him; developed during his years on an *Etan* meteor and lasting for the rest of his life. As volume after volume of the diary was shelved with disconcerting rapidity, his even more necessary, but occasional, poems were

As Dr. Newcome puts it, Benson was "one of those . . . who so enjoy their exercise of wit[ting] that his diary becomes a sort of personal indulgence—the satisfaction of some compulsive craving for self-analysis and self-expression." After some preliminary attempts, he started in earnest soon after his father's sudden death. "He was under heavy emotional strain but found that the call of duty on leaving for his new owner . . . at the arthropodscope. . . . Sequels had sustained him; over and over, however, it was the publication of his *Eton* predecessor, William Johnson Cory's *Letters and Journals*.

which had introduced him to the desirability of keeping a diary, both for therapy and solace, an exercise to which Benson could add his own special blend of imaginative description and humorous observation.

He began in too great detail, the coverage and pace having to be established by trial. Length alone ensured that the earlier volumes, in which cover the final years of his teaching career at Eaton, now form "the thickest of the schoolmaster's life and trials," as he has written, "with the pleasures and frustrations of his work there presented in great detail. Benson could, amusedly, see through the persons of his teaching manner, and the students, the teachers and the specialization of the school, and, to him, as an educational liberal, with some of the irritation that he needed to fuel the journal. Other frustrations were there too, but need to be examined too closely. He was always sensitive to the adolescent boyish charm, which was the spring of his success as a teacher and tutor, aware too of the "tenuous dividing line between the intellect and the affections" (Dr. Novosome well puts it) that produced a slough from which man like Coon or Fallon, Benson would realize enough to escape.

and Cory's career provided a personal warning as well as a literary one. Impotus. The tensions of Eton could be attributed, along with various administrative humiliations, to his coming to find his "work" in the world was "slavery," though it was not until he had rejected tentative approaches about the headmastership (after he had of intriguing orchidodolists, polo-ing in the States, and a brief frood from the fascination of Eton).

Authorship and a rapidly growing literary celebrity offered him the chance to escape, and he took it. In view of the long depressions that were to come later in his life, it is fortunate that to do so. His big break came in 1892 (which is a fitting thing among linguists, as the year 1892 is the year in which the first of the Jan bishings) helped to establish his reputation, and his three-volume edition of Queen Victoria's early letters established his wealth. But his principal fame was that of a poet, and his output includes "Laud of Hope and Glory" and other especially suited to Elgar, whom he dedicated them to music. Benson's novel first.

The Cambridge to which he returned seemed at first to be so much changed that he had to retrace his graduate days at King's; old friends had gone and new acquaintances were auspicious of him. Magdalen, then a very down-at-the-heel college, had been the scene of a "bridge" one of his Eton colleagues (snored) charmed to have a valet for a non-stipendiary fellow, as Benson was soon reinstated in the traditional framework the long but part of a stage in Cambridge. He soon felt more attached to the college than he had been to the school, and now set himself the laudable aim of raising it to its proper place in the university.

It took some time to settle in to his life as a feeling. Several years were to pass before he came to realize that he had at first made the mistake of feeling "that people here lived in an intellectual atmosphere. They do not! They live in affairs and gossip. They hate their work, their family, and have few other interests." It was the time this academic verity he dished on him, Benson had found himself a niche in the grandest of dining-clubby and the upper crust life at the universities. Discovering the curious and exclusive of Syndicates as vantage-points for the recording observer.

When the Mastership of his College fell prematurely vacant, it was so firmly established as a Magdalene figure, and as a benefactor that he was the obvious choice to succeed. (There is a hint by Benson himself that could be interpreted as his buying his way in, but rejection would have been

ugrateful.) His wealth increased in proportion to his dignities, and his gifts to march both; more at the end of his life he appears to have weighed on either a scale of a million. Additional benefactions were made to the college, the royalties and later by the offering of one of his American lodgings. The college was adorned and endowed as it had not been for generations. And further dignities were conferred on him, and a step allowing him to claim in a honorary capacity the highest doctorate which his writings could never have earned; never a scholastic. Because achieved, few dignities were conferred on him for which he had so long pined.

College business did not diminish his literary output. From A College Window, the tone of which Newswam describes as "elderly and sedate," self-satisfied and avuncular," full of platitudes and repetitious phrases, to the more raucous and very soon after Benson was elected to Magdalene. He could not resist the temptation of writing in the guise of an old-established academic, and he wrote a number of scolding, cringing, extra-mural reader's letters on the pleasures of his new apologetic mode. Many more books and essays followed, or, easily parodied in the family circle as his brother Mordecai put it, "the voluminous and unendingly embarrassing sentimental apostrophe," or his other brother Frederick's dapper society novels—Arthur Benson's book made him a comic figure in literary circles, as Edward Mordike said, "like a man assailing John Brooke from having him as a contributor to a proposed Roper-Brooke memorial volume, but outside those circles their following was small." The fact that the first edition of Newswam rightly reminds us of the quality of the autobiographical writing of Benson's later years—including *The Trefoll* and *Memoirs and Friends*, books in which the author's self-righteousness and detached urbanity "of his reflective publications, Benson himself recognized to the audience that he catered to, so fluently and lucratively, the taste of the stridently middle-aged of every decade, the uncouth and sentimental middle class," was irresistible, however much deplored the fan-mail of huck-

Their buying of his books enabled him to keep up his studies. He was called an "armchair" calls of the collegio position, and the position enabled him to maintain a vantage point that was of special value to him as a diarist. By birth and care he was a student, and he was placed as eu observer of elurchnism (although his closeness to the ecclesiastical heights reduced his never erong religious instinct, and he was rather a political context), of the uppermost reaches of educational and academic society. Education and Windsor connections provided him with an entrée to aristocratic circles, and he was the favored deference and elaborate comarom of the latter appealing to his well-developed sense of the ridiculous. Not that he was ever disrespectful to Queen Victoria, to whom he was devoted, but the coronation of Edward VII, whom he disliked, was seen as being for the new sovereign.

The Apotheosis of Buttone, not the

He was a sharp-eyed describer of the human condition, and his terrible mixture of gaiety and gloom which is produced by fuercials in elderly men, flushed with alcohol and with a subdued twinkle in the eyes. Individuals were noted with a neat but never creeping aptitude, from the "old" of the University of Cambridge "with his face like a damaged double strawberry" to H. M. Butler (Master of Trinity College) "like the Almighty in Blake's designs for Job"; Hardy (in 1911) giving the impression of a "bald, bearded, and somewhat faded" man, "regiment," or Hausman's wearing "a funny little round cap like a ten-cake."

The accent is always acute, as each thumbnail portrait recalls something of the style of his conversation; Hugh Walpole once said that Benson was "a good talker"; he was thoroughly malicious. He picked out his friends' weaknesses like clams out of a mud puddle.

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